

IN THE NAME OF THE CZAR

BY MARIAN POWER

A YOUNG man with that sharply cut mouth and that air of being ready for any emergency, which distinguishes the British sailor, stood by the glass doors, looking down the length of the *furnoir* of the Hotel Beau Rivage at La Sevierie. He had come out for that rare thing to those who serve his Majesty afloat, three weeks' leave of absence, and as he surveyed the scene before him, and listened to the chatter of men and women in many and varied tongues, and then let his eyes rove through the line of great windows toward the blue lake and the snow-capped mountains, he indulged in the pious hope that the Admiralty would not try on any of its usual tricks and bid him rejoice before his portmanteau was well unpacked.

As Bobby stood there a girl came up and called him by name. It was his cousin, Alice Coombes. "That is right," he commented genially, but enthusiastically, "proper walking kit that."

"If you are ready," she answered, buttoning a dog-skin glove. All at once Bobby laid his hand on her arm. "I say, who is that?" he demanded.

Miss Coombes looked down the length of the corridor. "Whom do you mean?" she returned.

"Why," retorted Bobby, as if there could be but one object of his inquiries, "that girl there. She walks like a queen."

Miss Coombes drew down the corners of her lips and showed no disposition to answer hastily. "You must know her name," Bobbie hurried on.

"Yes," answered he, "in a cool, neat voice; of course I do. She is Mademoiselle de Bardki. She says she is Russian. Do you think her so very good-looking. Lots of men do. But I am not sure myself that she is quite nice."

Bobby wheeled round and stared at his informant. He had come out, nominally, to pay his uncle and guardian a visit—in reality to see Alice. There had always been an impression that one day he and she would marry, and Bobby, if he had not given the notion much thought, had, at least, not combated it. Now, as he looked down at the short, generously developed figure which the walking skirt, the thick boots, and a hat and coat designed strictly for use did nothing to render graceful, it suddenly occurred to him how differently women wore frocks.

While these reflections were upsetting the even tenor of Lieutenant Bellew's mind, Mademoiselle de Bardki passed and nodded to Alice.

"You know her?" gasped Bobby. Touching Alice sharply on the arm, "Introduce me, somehow."

Miss Coombes went up to the tall Russian girl. "My cousin, Mr. Bellew, wants to know you," she said. "May I introduce him?"

There was that in the tone which seemed to Bobby to invite a refusal. He told himself that he had not known that Alice's voice could be so disagreeable. How pale and washed-out her blue eyes looked before the lights and shades in Mademoiselle de Bardki's brown ones!

"You are an English officer?" questioned the Russian. "A sailor," explained Bobby.

"Ah, so!" murmured Mademoiselle, and she looked at him attentively. "I think," she said, "we shall be friends. *Au revoir, monsieur*."

She smiled at him as Bobby reluctantly opened the door for her. Two weeks out of Bobby's three had barely elapsed when Alice Coombes brought up an old man with a thin-waisted figure, a white imperial, and a well-preserved air.

"Bobby," she explained, "Monsieur de Portales knew your father. My cousin, Mr. Bellew, the Chevalier de Portales."

"You knew my father, sir?" began Bobby. "I knew Bobby Bellew of the *Enchantress*," returned the chevalier, with only the slightest accent, to distinguish his English from that of a native. "He and I were chums together before Sebastopol. So you are Bobby's son—Bobby the Second? We will sit down and drink coffee," he hailed a waiter. "Benedictine or cognac?" he concluded.

"I am afraid," he answered, "that I cannot stay now. Mademoiselle de Bardki has promised to let me row her on the lake. But some other time, if I may, I should like to hear you talk about my father."

the news came of a fresh attempt on the life of the Czar of Russia. The story sent a thrill of dismay even through the pleasure-loving community of La Sevierie.

"Can nothing be done?" demanded Bobby of the chevalier.

The old man looked at the boy a moment before he answered. "You must change Russia root and branch before you can judge men and circumstances."

"It is the Czar I pity," went on Bobby. "Poor beggar! he'll pay the price, whatever may be the end of it all."

"Yes," answered the Frenchman, "I should say that in the end it will be Nicholas II. who will pay the price."

"I am going to get out of this tomorrow," said Bobby abruptly.

"Tired of us?" inquired the chevalier.

"Work is the best thing for me," the boy answered, as he got up and walked off.

The old man looked after him with a very understanding smile. "So," he concluded, "she has refused him. But that will not make the English girl less jealous. And when women are jealous their wits desert them. They will believe exactly what they are told."

"Ah, mademoiselle," he rose and bowed gallantly as Alice Coombes passed by. "Will you honor an old man, mademoiselle?"

He pulled up one of the gay basket chairs. It was painted a pinky purple and Alice had on a red blouse, but a trifle like that did not disturb Miss Coombes.

As they came to the long shadow cast by a Minerva, Miss Coombes spoke again.

"Bobby," she said, "I am sure you ought to know, it is about Mademoiselle de Bardki."

"What about her?" demanded the young man sharply.

"It is very strange," she answered, "I don't want to think ill of people but I saw her go into the chevalier's room by the window. It is that one there," and she indicated the first of a line of private apartments.

"I know it because he pointed it out to me one day. I saw mademoiselle go in there—she had a key to open that gate, and she went in just as if it were a thing she was in the habit of doing."

Bobby Bellew turned on his cousin. "What were you doing to see all that?" he thundered.

"I slipped out here to look at the mountains, while they were dancing the cotillon. I was standing by that figure there, so I suppose mademoiselle did not notice me."

"I know you are mistaken," he declared. "Mademoiselle de Bardki may not be in the ballroom, but I took her to the lift about a quarter of an hour ago. She had torn her dress."

This time Alice laughed outright. Bobby shut the door angrily on her and hurried down the terrace. He had a few minutes in which to act. He cast a glance at each plaster deity as he passed to make sure that no shadow concealed another spectator, vaulted the iron gate, and walked straight up to the long window of the Chevalier de Portales' room.

The blind was down, but the sash was not fastened. Bobby pushed it back. He caught a glimpse of a

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to ask you if you will come on the lake with us."

The Russian girl hesitated. "I was to say," Alice went on, "that he knew you would come because of—of last night."

"I will come," she decided.

"He has taken the boat down the lake and we are to join him. You won't mind the walk," Alice answered.

The two set out together, took the track through the wood and followed it until they came opposite a rarely-used landing-stage. It was separated from the high road by vineyards which rose on terraces. Not until she was going down the length of planks did Marsha de Bardki see who was to row them.

She stopped—half turned; Alice, behind her, walked steadily forward.

"Mademoiselle," apologized the Chevalier de Portales, for it was he who rose up in the boat, "I am but a sorry substitute. I am afraid, but our dear friend Monsieur Bellew has asked me to row you out to the island. He has been detained—official papers I understand—but he will join us for lunch."

Before she replied the girl's eye swept the landscape. Not a creature was on the road; only a very old man was pruning the vines a few feet above their heads.

"Get in, please, mademoiselle," the Frenchman suggested, "and, Mademoiselle Alice, will you steer?"

In another moment they were seated. Marsha's lips were pressed tightly together. The chevalier rowed a marvelous stroke for an old man. As the boat skimmed over the surface of the water its occupants were strangely silent. Once a steamer, plying from village to village along the lake, puffed past them. Mademoiselle de Bardki raised her hand. Alice put up her own hand and laid her firm fingers on those of the Russian.

"Don't," she said, sharply. "The Frenchman leaned forward. 'I think, mademoiselle, you must not do that again,' he remarked pleasantly."

They came to the island, the boat was fastened to a ring in the wall; the chevalier, still with noticeable agility for threescore and ten, sprang ashore.

"We await our friend here," he announced. "Permit me, mademoiselle," and he offered his hand.

"Now, mademoiselle, please," said the Frenchman, persistently.

As soon as Marsha found herself on the little square of land, she went to the low wall and looked over.

"The lake is very deep about here," a suave voice at her elbow observed.

She turned and faced the chevalier. "What are you going to do with me?" she demanded.

"Ah! so you guessed. I am going to leave you here," Monsieur de Portales explained.

"Until when?"

"Until the messenger I am sending to them has got twelve hours' start, unless you—"

"Unless what?"

"Unless you renounce your own journey."

"And abandon my cause, my country, our father, the Czar?"

"Just so."

The girl looked haughtily at him. "Of course I refuse," she said.

"Then I fear we must put you to the inconvenience of remaining here until to-morrow morning."

Marsha de Bardki turned abruptly to Miss Coombes. "You are English," she cried, "and you English love your king and your country. I appeal to you. This man is not the Chevalier de Portales—he is Demitri Ivanoff, a noted nihilist. The last outrage was of his planning. He is about to send his accomplices back to Russia to make another attempt on the life of our Czar. If I had but found all the details of his plot last night I should have started at once for St. Petersburg. I failed. I trusted to have another chance, to be more successful. Instead he has lured me here, his minions are on their way to Russia, and tomorrow it may be too late. It is you, an English girl, who helped to lead me into this trap. Now, when you know the truth, will you not help me instead of him?"

Alice Coombes smiled coldly.

"That is very clever, mademoiselle," she said, "but I do not believe you. The chevalier heard you arrange last night to elope with my cousin. But his future, his career, shall not be ruined by such a woman as you. Bobby leaves to rejoin his ship to-night. Until he is gone, until it is too late for you to go after him, we shall keep you out of the way."

"And," went on the chevalier, "we will make you as comfortable as we can, but we propose to bind you to that tree."

Marsha looked toward the wind-swept tree. Now that it was inevitable, she accepted her fate with all the impassiveness of her race.

"You see," explained the chevalier, "if we left you the use of your hands, you might try to make signals again."

taken an oath to devote their lives to the protection of our lord and sovereign; to follow the revolutionaries from place to place, and daily, hourly, to keep watch on them; to risk life, wealth, ease, happiness—everything—to circumvent the nihilists. To nihilism we oppose the Society of the Holy Drujina. It was that society which sent me here to keep watch on the man you know as the Chevalier de Portales. His name is Demitri Ivanoff. He is one of the most dangerous of the militant anarchists. It was he who planned the latest attempt on the life of the Czar, which, thanks to the vigilance of the Holy Drujina, miscarried. But a fresh attempt will be made next Sunday unless I can give warning to our society. It was to make sure of the date that you found me in Ivanoff's room last night. Whoever saw me, doubtless gave him warning also. Who saw me?" she asked the last question sharply.

Unwillingly Bobby told her.

"Ah!" was all Mademoiselle de Bardki answered, and then she went on. "It was Demitri Ivanoff who lured me here. He intended to keep me here until the bombs were well on their way to Russia."

Almost as she uttered these words, the last cord fell about her. She walked quickly towards the boat.

As he stepped down to help her into the boat he saw that already the waters were troubled, that already the little craft was straining at its moorings. But what he did not see was that as he dipped his oars and shot the boat out from the square of moorings, a peasant, the same bent man who had watched the chevalier and his party set out and who, in the intervals of pruning the vines had kept an eye on the island, suddenly straightened his aged back, fetched a field-glass from a crack in the wall, swept the lake with it, then laying down his shears, made off up the steep path, and set off for La Sevierie.

"Keep her head straight!" shouted Bobby, as the storm struck the boat.

It came all in a minute. As suddenly as the lights are turned off on the stage—the sun seemed to snap out and a grayness fell about them. The water as steady as a sky, churned and rolled; the wind howled. Bobby bent his back. There was a puff as if a hurricane stayed to take breath, and then, with a whistle and a shriek, it rushed on them again.

Bobby battled, his teeth set, his brow knit. Marsha sat still and carefully obeyed his directions.

One hand was loose and with it the victim had just managed to flounder the handkerchief!

"Are you frightened?" he called once.

"Only," she answered, "that we may not be there in time."

"Marsha," he cried, for love is greater than wind and wave, "if we are in time—when this is over—will you marry me?"

She paused. "Yes—if I am in time," she said slowly, "and you will share my life work with me."

"Yes," he answered, "just so we are together for life."

He shot the boat across a wave, held on to it while it went down into the waste of swirling water.

Then Marsha, who, during the last ten minutes had looked again and again to La Sevierie, bent forward, her face white with alarm.

"We are being pursued," she cried in fear.

"What do you mean?" called back Bobby.

"A boat has come out from La Sevierie. It is rowed by two men and it is making toward us. No one would venture out in such a storm unless it were something urgent."

Marsha was right. The boat was evidently making toward them, and it was coming along comparatively easy, for protected by the mountains it had not yet experienced the full force of the gale.

"It is out of the water," said Marsha in a strange, still tone.

"Are you hit?" cried Bobby. But before any answer could come to him, the storm, as if up till now it had been playing with them, suddenly bore down on them with all its violence. A blackness encircled them, the wind howled, the water seemed to rise up to meet the sky. There was no making headway. Bobby and Marsha could but see one another dimly. The sky, the land, the white mountains were all blotted out. The tiny boat was caught, tossed, while a cloud, sulphurous and yet ink black, closed right about them.

They lived through it, and with that most mighty effort the worst of the storm was over. The wind began to fall, the sky to clear.

One danger passed, Bobby looked about him to face another.

"Listen," she went on as Bobby worked at the knots, "I must leave Switzerland to-night. I dare not take the train at La Sevierie; the station will be watched. Will you row me down the lake to one of the villages lower down?"

"Why must you go?" demanded Bobby.

"To avert an awful disaster; to prevent a hideous crime."

"Who persuaded you to come here?" demanded Bobby.

The Russian girl ignored the question. "Last night," she went on, "you trusted me without explanation. Now I can tell you everything."

A blast of wind came slapping against the weather-beaten tree. Bobby looked up apprehensively.

"You know," Marsha began again, "the unhappy condition of my country. A little band of patriots have



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"I wonder, mademoiselle," he went on, "if there is an exception to the rule that women cannot keep a secret?"

"What do you mean?" asked Alice again.

"Mademoiselle," the old man answered with his most benevolent smile, "if you were to see a friend in peril and that friend was a man in danger of being taken in by a designing woman, would you put out your hand to save him?"

For the third time Alice Coombes asked the same question.

"Then the Chevalier de Portales bent forward and told her."

"Bobby," gasped Miss Coombes, and she pushed her way through the crowd until she could lay her hand on her cousin's arm, "I am dreadfully upset. I wonder what I ought to do."

The young man looked down at his cousin, and since she seemed to desire it, drew her out of the gutter of the ball-room into the comparative quiet of a little Turkish smoking-room at the far end of the corridor.

woman in the act of replacing a packet of papers in a dispatch box before Mademoiselle de Bardki, startled by the moving aside of the blind, turned and faced him:

"You," she whispered, "you!"

"Yes," he answered. "Come out of this room."

The Englishman then waited for him to speak.

"Mademoiselle," began Bobby, "your absence from the ballroom has been remarked. You were watched—seen to go through that gate—to enter that room."

"Then," returned Marsha, as if evidence and espionage were her daily portion, "I must go back at once."

Bobby looked about him. "But how?" To the right of them were more iron gates, partitioning other spaces before other private rooms; to the left of them was the ballroom terrace; in front of them the balustrade, and after it came a drop of some twenty feet into the street.

"Was it a woman?" the girl asked suddenly.

"Yes."

"Then," she replied, "all you have to do is to take her to supper. While you are there you must make her believe that you went into the chevalier's room and found it empty. I can manage the rest. You will see me seated at a table near to you almost as soon as you are there. Go now."

Bobby Bellew stood aghast before the mingled simplicity of the plan and the duplicity of the woman, whom, even at this moment, he knew he loved.

"Yes," he said, gravely, "I will do that."

"No," she cried vehemently, "you will do nothing for me unless—"

"Unless—" he echoed, and sharply he caught his breath.

"You can trust me until I can explain."

He bent and kissed her hand.

The following morning Miss Coombes proceeded with an air of confidence to the room of Mademoiselle de Bardki.

"Mademoiselle," she began, "my cousin has sent me